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Message Text

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EUR:MPRARRIS
S/S:DROBINSON
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 098357

EXDIS MIL ADDEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING REPEAT ATHENS 3107 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ANKARA
NICOSIA USNATO DATED APR 13:

QTE: F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 3107

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, NATO, MPOL, GR, US
SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP ON CLARIFICATION ON EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN
PROGRAM

REF: ATHENS 2702

1. WE HAVE NOT AS YET GONE BACK TO AMBASSADOR TZOUNIS
IN CONNECTION WITH THE POINTS HE RAISED ON APRIL 1
CONCERNING THE GREECE-NATO TALKS (PARAS 9-11 OF REFTEL).
SINCE THEN,GOG CONCERN OVER THE AEGEAN NAVAL COMMAND
ISSUE HAS ALSO BEEN RAISED BY MINISTER AVEROFF WITH THE
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AMBASSADOR AND BY THE CHIEF OF THE HELLENIC NAVY GEN-
ERAL STAFF, ADMIRAL KONOFAOS, WITH THE DEFENSE ATTACHE,
BOTH ON APRIL 12. (SEE ALSO DAO THENS IR 6-837-130-78, DTG
131230Z APR 78 WHICH DESCRIBES GREEK NAVY'S WITHDRAWAL FROM
NATO CPX APRIL 9 BECAUSE OF THIS VERY POINT.)

2. AVEROFF AND KONOFAOS BOTH MADE THE SAME POINT WHICH

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TZOUNIS HAD MADE EARLIER TO THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR, I.E.
THAT WHILE GOOD PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE IN RESOLVING THE
VARIOUS ISSUES IN CONNECTION WITH THE "SPECIAL RE-
LATIONSHIP" GREECE WAS NETOTIATING WITH NATO, NATO'S
ALLEGED INSISTENCE ON THE TASK FORCE COMMANDER CON-
CEPT, TO REPLACE THE AREA COMMANDER CONCEPT, WOULD
INEVITABLY LEAD TO A BREAKDOWN IN THOSE NEGOTIATIONS.
ALL THREE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE GOG COULD NOT ACCEPT
NAVAL COMMAND ARRANGEMENTS UNDER THE SPECIAL RELATIONS-
SHIP WHICH WOULD BE LESS FAVORABLE FOR GREECE
THAN THOSE EXISTING BEFORE GREECE WITHDREW FROM THE
MILITARY WING OF THE ALLIANCE. MINISTER AVEROFF MADE
A FURTHER POINT RELATING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
TASK FORCE COMMANDER CONCEPT TO THE POLITICAL SITUATION
IN THE AEGEAN AS IT IS AFFECTED BY THE GREEK-TURKISH
DISPUTE OVER THE CONTINENTAL SHELF. ITS ACCEPTANCE BY
THE GOG, HE ARGUED, WOULD BE VIEWED BY THE TURKS AS A
SIGN OF GREEK WEAKNESS.
3. THE NAVAL COMMAND CONTROVERSY HAS APPEARED IN THE
PRESS IN THE PAST BUT WAS LINKED FOR THE FIRST TIME
TO THE ONGOING GREECE-NATO DISCUSSIONS IN AN APRIL 13
ARTICLE IN INDEPENDENT KATHERIMINI (WHICH USUALLY TAKES
A PRO-GOVERNMENT LINE AND HAS GOOD SOURCES IN THE GOGO).
ACCORDING TO THIS ARTICLE, A GREEK MILITARY COMMITTEE
CONDUCTED EXPLORATORY DISCUSSIONS AT SHAPE RECENTLY IN THE
FRAMEWORK OF THE GREEK NATO "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" TALKS.
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THE PURPOSE WAS TO EXPLAIN GREEK VIEWS, THE ARTICLE SAID,
AND THE COMMITTEE'S VISIT TO SHAPE WAS DESCRIBED AS A
CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSIONS WHICH GENERAL DAVOS
HAD HAD WITH GENERAL HAIG LAST MONTH AT A TECHNI-
CAL MILITARY LEVEL. NATO'S REPLIES TO THE GREEK
VIEWS ARE EXPECTED NO LATER THAN MAY, THE ARTICLE
WENT ON, WHICH WOULD STILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR NEGO-
TIATIONS TO BE COMPLETED, AS THE GREEKS WANT, BY THE
END OF JUNE. THE ARTICLE THEN CITES DIPLOMATIC SOURCES
IN BRUSSELS AS SAYING THAT THE GREEK SIDE IS WAITING
FOR ANSWERS FROM NATO TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:
(A) SETTLEMENT OF THE OPERATIONAL NAVAL COMMAND PROB-
LEM IN THE AEGEAN, (B) AIR DEFENSE (THE EXCHANGE OF
INFORMATION BETWEEN GREECE AND NATO): AND (C) THE STATUS
OF GREEK FORCES IN THE EVENT OF "AUTOMATIC MOBILIZATION"
UNDER THE NATO ALERT SYSTEM.

4. ACTION REQUEST: ALTHOUGH WE WOULD AGREE THAT THE
EMBASSY SHOULD NOT BECOME OFFICIALLY INVOLVED IN BI-
LATERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOG CONCERNING THESE
MULTILATERAL MATTERS WHICH SHOULD PROPERLY BE HANDLED
IN NATO CHANNELS, WE OWE THE GOG SOME KIND OF USG COM-

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MENT IN VIEW OF TZOUNIS' DIRECT REQUEST (REFTEL) AND
THE FACT MINISTER AVEROFF HAS RAISED THE MATTER DIRECT-
LY WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND ADMIRAL KONOFAOS WITH THE
DEFENSE ATTACHE. WE WOULD, THEREFORE, APPRECIATE
RECEIVING GUIDANCE FROM THE DEPARTMENT ON HOW WE
SHOULD RESPOND TO THE GOG ON THIS ISSUE.

6. THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REPEAT THIS MESSAGE
TO GENERAL HAIG FOR HIS INFORMATION AND COMMENTS.
MCCLOSKEY
UNQTE CHRISTOPHER

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